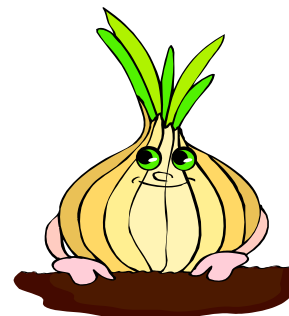




Alaska Farmers' Market Nutrition Program 2008



GENERAL INFORMATION

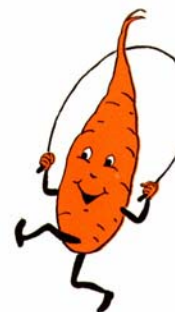
The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) was enacted July 2, 1992, as Public Law 102-314. The Healthy Meals for Healthy American Act of 1994 amended Public Law 102-314. In 2001 the FMNP was expanded to serve eligible Seniors sixty and older. The FMNP is funded by federal grants from USDA, Food and Nutrition Services to state agencies that administer the program, (for instance, the Dept. of Health and Social Services in Alaska).

PURPOSE OF PROGRAM

The primary purposes of FMNP are to:

- 1) provide fresh nutritious, unprepared foods (such as fruits and vegetables) from farmers' markets to:
 - a. women, infants and children who are nutritionally at risk and participating in the WIC nutrition program, and
 - b. eligible seniors in areas where the Senior FMNP is offered.
- 2) expand awareness and use of farmers' markets and increase their sales.

The WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) program provides supplemental foods, nutrition education and health referrals to children under the age of five and pregnant, breastfeeding or post partum women who are nutritionally at risk. The WIC Program aims to improve pregnancy outcomes and promote growth and development in children.



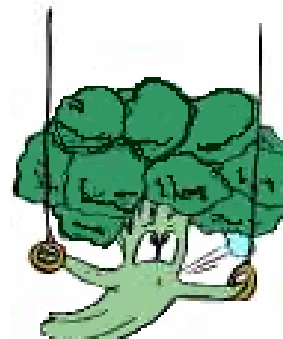
HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

In 2008, each eligible WIC and Senior participant will receive \$25 worth of coupons, each with a value of \$5.00.

Alaska-grown fruits and vegetables from authorized farmers at farmstands or farmers' markets. Participants receive information about the health and nutrition benefits of eating fresh fruits and vegetables, how to buy, store and prepare fresh produce and how to shop effectively at farmers' markets. Farmers interested in participating in the program must apply and have a valid, signed agreement with the State WIC Office. Each authorized farmer receives a rubber stamp with an assigned number to validate the coupons redeemed, as well as a decal showing authorization for the current year, and signs to display at the farmstand or market stall. Farmers may redeem the coupons directly at their banks.

ELIGIBLE FOODS

“Eligible foods” are fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits, berries, vegetables and herbs for human consumption. Eligible foods may not be processed or prepared beyond their natural state except for usual harvesting and cleaning processes. Honey, maple syrup, cider, nuts, seeds, eggs, meat, cheese and seafood are examples of foods **not eligible** to be purchased with FMNP coupons.



RULES & PROCEDURES

Only authorized farmers, farmstands and farmers’ markets that have valid agreements with the State WIC Office may redeem FMNP coupons. They must agree to abide by FMNP program rules, which include:

1. Accepting FMNP coupons only for eligible, unprocessed, fresh, locally grown fruits, vegetables and herbs.
2. Accepting FMNP coupons only at their authorized location(s).
3. Accepting coupons only during valid program dates.
4. Displaying the **"WIC/Senior Farmers' Market Coupons Welcome Here!"** sign and authorization decal when selling eligible produce at the farmers’ market.
5. Providing customers with the full amount of produce for the value of each coupon, no change may be given.
6. Stamping the "Farmer Number" on each coupon before redeeming.
7. Providing equitable treatment to WIC and Senior customers, offering produce that is of the same quality and price as that sold to other customers.
8. Not charging sales tax in conjunction with any coupon transaction.
9. Cooperating with WIC program staff in monitoring for compliance with program rules.



MONITORING FOR PROGRAM COMPLIANCE

Farmers’ Markets and farmstands are monitored for compliance with program rules. Violation of the rules may result in the market or farmer being disqualified from the program. If a market or farmer is disqualified, the State WIC Office will notify the market manager or farmer in writing, at least fifteen (15) days prior to the disqualification effective date.

HOW DO FARMERS BENEFIT BY PARTICIPATING IN FMNP?

Farmers who have participated in the program in the past recommend the program almost unanimously. In 2007, the WIC FMNP generated sales of \$194,000 for authorized farmers in the Anchorage, Fairbanks, Homer, Kenai, Dillingham, Delta Junction and Mat-Su areas. In 2007, the Senior program, available in the Anchorage, Mat-Su, Fairbanks, Homer, Delta Junction and Kenai areas, had redemptions totaling 60,000. Many participants continue to shop at the Farmers’ Markets after using all their coupons. In addition to increased sales, FMNP promotes awareness of agriculture in Alaska and improves the health and nutrition of Alaska residents

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